

A Glance at the Line

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IN March, 1918, the Central Powers launched their last great attack on the Allies and in a few weeks had overrun a tremendous territory. To laymen like ourselves the map was a terrifying exhibit. Nevertheless, in April, 1918, Marshal Foch stated judicially—"I much prefer my position to Ludendorff's," and the event handsomely justified his preference.

I propose that we shall cast a glance at the map of the civilized world and look at the line of battle between the Church and her opponents as it now lies, in order to see if we can extract any comfort and encouragement therefrom. I must not press the analogy and metaphor too closely, but they will perhaps serve the purpose as well as any other.

On the face of things it looks very much as the actual map did after the great drive of March, 1918—worse in fact. Not to go too far back, less than one hundred years ago the civilized world called itself Christian and was in fact largely Christian in its views. The great mass of people outside the Catholic Church (excluding, of course, the Jews) believed in a dogmatic revealed religion and in the Divinity of Our Lord, and professed a code of morals definitely based upon and related to those beliefs. The Protestant denominations held to the Bible as the sole rule of faith. The Greek Orthodox Church was schismatic rather than heretical from our point of view. Protestants—almost all—and Greek Orthodox, agreed with us on the great facts of Revelation and the Incarnation. To that extent the civilized world was Christian. What is the situation today?

I do not wish to be understood as generalizing too sharply or widely. It is not true to say that there has been a conscious and deliberate abandonment of dogmatic religious faith on the part of people in general. It is not true to say that people in general have consciously and deliberately denied that there is a moral law, or that they have generally and deliberately ordered their lives as if there were no moral law. It is, however, true to say that a great many people today do hold opinions and ideas—vague, half-formed, imperfect, and frequently inconsistent—which are incompatible with and contradictory to the existence and the dictates of dogmatic religion. It is true to say that these opinions and ideas are also in great part incompatible with and contradictory to the existence and the dictates of the moral law. It is true to say that many people in many respects order their lives in a manner contrary to those dictates. And it is true to say that there is an evident tendency to increase in the number of all these people.

Let us look at the opinions and ideas current around us outside of our Church and see what sort of a creed of belief and what sort of a code of ethics is commonly held—held, for the most part implicitly and almost unconsciously. We may easily recognize the following articles in the modern creed:

First: Rejection of all dogmatic revealed religion.

Second: A general recognition of a God of sorts; some think a *finite* God who has yet to attain perfection; some think an *evolving* God, who will evolve forever; most people think an *immanent* rather than *transcendent* God, who is really one with us, and of whom we are part; in any event an *unknowable* God who has never revealed Himself to us in any definite way and who has never interfered with "laws of nature."

Third: A firm belief in "laws of nature" as fixed, immutable, eternal, to which God is, in fact, subject.

Fourth: A firm belief in Evolution as the fundamental law of nature, governing and explaining all things, and having no necessity for a Creator.

Fifth: A firm belief in the automatic "progress" and perfectibility of man in this life.

Sixth: Morality purely a question of social relations and subject to change as time goes on.

Seventh: Original sin a myth; Hell an outworn superstition intolerable to modern minds.

Eighth: Conscience largely a matter of endocrine glands; free will a meaningless expression.

Ninth: Self-expression emphasized as against self-control.

Tenth: Some sort of survival of consciousness after death (Myers story).

Eleventh: The "Golden Rule" and "Service" the laws of good living.

Twelfth: All religions equally good—provided they "work."

We will not stop to cavil at inconsistencies; it is enough to note the sweeping change that has been accomplished in the beliefs and codes of many people in the last century. With these changes have come great changes in what we may call the instinctive emotions or feeling of the same people—for instance:

(a) An exaggerated dread of physical suffering and a great shrinking from physical pain as the greatest possible evil;

(b) A feverish pursuit of "pleasure;" a "good time" the birthright of the young.

(c) Work a curse.

May I remind you that I am talking of tendencies? The synthesis that I have made is not representative of everyone's views outside the Church. It is, however, fully and fairly representative of prevailing tendencies outside the Church and I may add this other common assumption to it, that is, that the position of the Church is today quite untenable in the light of what modern scholarship and modern science have definitely shown to be facts no longer open to question. Adherents of that Church continue adherents only because this Church has forbidden them to be either scholars or scientists, or because it is possible, according to the Church, to believe something which is demonstrated by reason to be false, *Credo quia impossibile*, or because Catholics do not in fact believe what they profess to believe. The Church has always fought scientific research and opposed popular education because they were incompatible with its doctrines, and would tend to weaken its power over men.

I have not been, I hope, unfair in this synthesis of

modern views, ideas and emotions, and I doubt that its general correctness will be seriously challenged by anyone conversant with modern literature, historical, scientific, philosophical and artistic—especially popular literature. How has such a change in popular “thinking” (if it can be called thinking) come about? What has caused it? Here we pick up the battle line analogy again.

We can clearly discern in the history of the last hundred years three main lines of attack on the Christianity of people in general. One of these attacks centered on the Bible—the “Higher Criticism” so called. Another—much the most powerful—spread itself along almost the entire battle line, viz., the attack from “science” in the name of “Evolution.” The third centered on the human intellect itself, viz., the attack from the Philosophy of Subjectivism. Let us glance a moment at the history of these three great “drives.”

Not to be too meticulous as to dates, the “Higher Criticism” dates from about the first third of the last century when a definite attack upon the historicity of the Gospels was opened in Germany. From evidence partly internal, partly external, the former being mainly emphasized, the Gospels were impeached as an imposture, being the product of writers of much more recent date than that of the supposed authors. By the middle of the century the controversy had spread to all countries. The power of the attack was especially felt by the Protestant denominations for the Lutheran adherents had all ultimately elected to stand or fall upon the Bible as the sole rule of faith, the authority of tradition as represented by the Church being totally rejected as also was the right of the Church to interpret the Bible. Owing to the fact that these denominations had staked everything upon the Bible as an inspired, infallible book, and their sole guide in doctrine and morals, the attack of the Higher Criticism proved to be resistless and the position was hopelessly lost at the first onset. And here let me note a very important fact which must be borne in mind throughout our study of this matter, and that is the element of *time*. I think I am safe in saying that the popular mind, during the last century, was usually about fifty years behind the facts, that is, it took about fifty years for the discoveries of scholars and scientists to percolate down to the general body and affect the

thought of that body. Nowadays the process of percolation is perhaps faster, thanks to the popular newspaper, which has discovered that "science," "scholarship," and above all "religion" are "live news" and eminently vendible. But the "Higher Criticism," arising as it did before the middle of the century, did not really infiltrate the popular mind until the days of Robert Elsmere in the famous late Victorian nineties. In similar manner the "Evolution" doctrine of Darwin as interpreted by Huxley and Tyndale, which reached its apex in the late seventies, has only within a comparatively short time become a burning popular issue. The subjective philosophy has reflected itself so far, but little, and that indirectly, in the talk of suburban salons, but it has influenced popular thinking not a little in other ways, and notably through the various forms of "modernism" in religious thought. Perhaps it too may yet be popularized.

After the Higher Criticism came the armies of Science with "Evolution" upon their banners, and it was a mighty tide, comparable only to the march of the Mongols under Genghis Khan. Within fifteen years from the publication of the "Origin of Species" Doctor John Tyndale, speaking at Belfast in 1874 as President of the British Association, proclaimed anew in the name of Evolutionary Science—the Lutheran doctrine of matter as the Be-all and the End-all of everything, containing within it the "promise and potency of all terrestrial life" and having no need of a Creator, for its origin or development. At the same time Herbert Spencer had built up most of his synthetic philosophy which provided a reasoned argument for the Evolutionary process. The invading army was infinitely better drilled and better armed than were the defenders. The Church retracted, her line unbroken, toward the Channel ports; most of the rest surrendered at discretion.

It is surely unnecessary to spend many words in emphasizing the force of the attack from science or the all-conquering powers of that magic word Evolution. Its influence has reached the very nooks and crannies of the occupied territory. Only a small scattered band of "fundamentalists" who have barricaded themselves in caves and cellars still offer sullen but ineffectual resistance, fighting as they do with clubs and pikes of ancient time

against giant howitzers and high explosive, yet refusing to yield—all honor to them for their high resolve! Reference to the articles of the creed as I have stated them will show how deeply the attack has affected popular thinking. The prevailing popular impression is that "Evolution" has completely wiped out the bases of religion; that it has supplanted God as Creator; and that it furnishes a complete explanation of life so far as this world is concerned. That it is an absolutely demonstrated fact is unquestioned.

The third line of attack, from the Philosophy of Subjectivism, began not long after the Evolution "drive" was launched. As I have said this particular attack has not as yet fully infiltrated the occupied territory. It has, however, completely occupied the principal fortified places and especially those formerly held by Protestant Christianity. What we have come to recognize as "Modernism" is peculiarly the consequence of this attack. It is in reality an attack upon the human intellect as such. I will not attempt to trace its origin in detail. Perhaps the most potent factor in it is the Kantian denial of the power of the speculative intellect to attain to any knowledge of the reality of things. Kant said that in a hundred years his philosophy would be understood. It seems as if he knew what he was saying, for at the root of all the modern varieties of subjectivism there lies his "Critique of Pure Reason." The essence of the matter is that this philosophy shuts a man up a close prisoner within himself, excludes him from real knowledge of anything outside himself, and forces him to measure all things by himself. It is Protagoras who is talking once more: "Man is the measure of all things." The emotions take the place of the intellect, "experience" replaces Revelation, metaphysics vanishes from the scene, God cannot be known by reason, everything is relative and there is no knowable Absolute. This is the soul of "Modernism" in all its forms. Protestant Christianity, by its insistence on the principle of "private judgment," left its right flank exposed to this attack, just as by its dependence upon the Bible as the exclusive rule of faith, it opened its left flank to the attack from the "Higher Criticism." It is not surprising, therefore, that its centre was broken and defeated. Modernism is now rapidly organizing the occupied territory, thanks to the

popular preacher, and has already established itself in what has been called intellectual "Suburbia."

Now the effect of this invasion upon the habits and the codes of behavior of people in the occupied territory has been very notable, and in describing this effect I will confine myself to tendencies, so as to avoid the suspicion of over-statement. Writing twenty-five years ago, Father Joseph Rickaby, S.J., noted the most important of these tendencies.

An evil of our time [he said] as compared with the sixteenth century is a want of "backbone"; I do not mean of athletic development and prowess, but of tenacious moral purpose in the conduct of life. The decay of faith has disintegrated character; instead of *Ethos* we have got a collection of *Fathe*.

What is "character?" It seems to me that the essence of character is a habit of self-control for a high purpose. Can any one deny that there is evident today a definite movement away from the idea of self-control to the opposite idea of "self-expression?" It seems to me that this tendency is the thread that runs through all the manifestations of modern life, the key to their ultimate meaning and origin, the note that dominates modern art and modern literature and the principle that is gradually establishing itself as the norm of human behavior. Why should people control their actions if their desires are "natural" and, therefore, good? Why should any act be wrong which does not frustrate or tend to frustrate some one else's desires? Why, indeed? Is not self-control merely a relic of ancient "taboos" and morbid "inhibitions?" Is not that the lesson taught by "modern research" into the historical origin of religious beliefs and "modern psychology's" probing of the human mind and soul? Certainly it is.

There is no need for many words on this part of the matter. We have merely to note the prevailing modern ideas of the conduct of the home, the school and the college, to see that the tendency is clearly away from discipline. Here and there warning voices are raised in new and unexpected quarters of which I shall say just a word in a few moments. Meanwhile let us simply note that the invading forces have greatly weakened belief in "character"—not so much, indeed, in character as such, for much

lip-service is still rendered to that, but in the fundamental reasons on which the notion of character is founded.

I have thus far endeavored to sketch in very broad strokes the position of the "line" as it lies today on the map, and to describe the forces which have brought it about. Can we say as did Marshal Foch in 1918 that we much prefer our position to that of the enemy? It seems to me that we can say this with great certainty, and I shall try to show you why. Let us look at the three great enemy "salients" (if they may be so called), viz., the Higher Criticism, Evolution and Subjectivism, and measure the real strength of their defences.

Early in the last century Strauss in Germany announced that the evidence showed the Synoptic Gospels to have been written at no earlier date than the middle of the second century A. D., and written, of course, by authors other than those recognized by the Christian tradition. A little later Baur, also a German, revised the Strauss figures as regards the Gospel of St. Matthew by some twenty years, placing it at 130-134 A. D., and agreeing with Strauss as to St. Mark and St. Luke. Thirty years later, I am touching only the high points, Renan placed St. Mark about 76 A. D., St. Matthew about 84 A. D., and St. Luke about 94 A. D. Still thirty years later Harnack placed St. Mark between 65 and 70 A. D., St. Matthew between 70 and 75 A. D., and St. Luke between 60 and 67 A. D. And finally Harnack said definitely—"Between the years 30 and 70 and upon the soil of Palestine, more precisely, at Jerusalem, all that was afterward taught was in existence and was fixed." From which brief survey we observe that starting at 150 A. D., the various schools of Higher Critics, after disputing the matter over some seventy-five years and mutually confuting each other's arguments, have arrived in the person of their latest and best qualified exponent at the conclusion that the Synoptic Gospels were written at about the time and in the place in which the Church has always supposed they were written, and that is, in summary, the last word today of the Higher Criticism. I will not stop to discuss the Gospel of St. John, but will merely hazard the opinion that, unless all signs fail, much the same result is in store for it. But of these facts the general body of the public knows nothing. All it knows is that the Higher Criticism has

destroyed the authenticity of the Gospels! It is at least fifty to seventy-five years behind the facts. There are no troops in the trenches of the Higher Criticism salient. It is undefended because it is indefensible.

What now of the scientific salient? Where is Evolution today? What forces are there behind its line?

Let us first note what we find to be wrong with the common idea of the evolutionary principle. The main thing that is wrong with it is not the notion that creation has proceeded by gradual steps, that things have gradually attained their perfection, or that there is a genetic link between species. That notion is quite in accord with our philosophy and theology. The thing that is wrong with it is the notion that the greater can of itself come from the less. Evolution considered as a method of creation is one thing; evolution as a substitute for creation is another thing altogether, and it is the latter thing that we are fighting. Now what has science—real science—to tell us today about Evolution. Happily we have an answer to just that question. Last August, Professor Henry Fairfield Osborn, of the Natural History Museum in New York, addressed the British Association on "The Problem of the origin of species as it appeared to Darwin in 1859, and as it appears to us today."

I take from it two passages: ¹

In fact the outstanding speculation of Darwin's and Herbert Spencer's time as to the causation of the origin of species have been pared down by laboratory analysis to a mere vestige of their former selves and the overweening confidence of one school of causation after another has been displaced by diffidence, doubt or even agnosticism, as expressed in the final address of Sir William Bateson whose recent death we lament at this meeting. To sum up, intensive laboratory and experimental research has added vastly to our knowledge of the functions of animals and of the heredity mechanism but has greatly increased the difficulties inherent in the problem of the origin of species. It is the *modes* and *causes* of the onward progressive movement of the germ plasm resulting in the consecutive origin of new adaptive specific forms which are rendered still more mysterious by the negative results of laboratory research.

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We seem to have reached an entirely new era in research on the problem of the origin of species marked by the decline and death of speculation and theories advanced upon the very limited

knowledge of the first half of the nineteenth century. Through **zoology and palaeontology** we have reached a solution of the least difficult half of the problem with which Charles Darwin was confronted. We know the modes by which sub-species and species originate, in fact there is little more on this subject to be known. But this very knowledge renders the problem of *causes* infinitely more difficult than it appeared to Darwin. The causes of "variation," to use the term he employed for the evolutionary process, lie in the way before us. They may be resolved or they may prove to be beyond human solution. We must resolutely face these alternatives, and in the meantime continue our synthesis over every field of biological research.

It is with the *causes* of evolution that we are concerned, not with its *modes*. And science today has nothing to tell us about those causes. That is the latest word on the subject. But there is more than this. Mr. Osborn himself has laid down three fundamental principles as demonstrated by palaeontology, viz., the *continuity* of speciation, the *predisposition* to speciate in *predetermined* directions, this predisposition *released* by adaptive reaction when conditions are suitable. Predisposition—predetermined! Strange words from a scientist are they not? Yet there they are! Compare them with the notions popularized by Tyndale, by Huxley, by Haeckel, and you find all the difference between right and wrong. If Professor Osborn speaks for science today, as he unquestionably does, then the scientific salient is empty of defenders and is surely ours for the taking.

Now as to the Subjectivism salient. We need not spend much time or many words on this part of the field. If there is one thing clearly evident in the world of thought today it is that Aristotle and St. Thomas are again coming into their own. The neo-scholastic school is the one school of philosophic thought which today displays real vitality. We seem indeed to be in something of that season of mental springtime which prevailed in Europe in the eleventh century when there was in bud the second great flowering of the human mind that has occurred in the history of the world. In ancient Greece all the compass points of human thought were marked off once and for all. There is no variety or vagary of thinking today that can not be referred to one of these points. Aristotle marked the magnetic pole then, and he marks it now, and the needle of human thinking, no matter how much it may swing east, or west, or south, tends ever to

return finally to the north. Men at all times have acted upon the Aristotelian philosophy. It is based upon those natural, spontaneous, primitive, infallible judgments of the human reason which Dr. Sheen calls "common sense," and derives from those first principles which that common sense recognizes by immediate judgment. St. Thomas baptized it and it has since been Christian. The needle has swung to the north again and Subjectivism is clearly on the wane.

A word as to character. I said that here and there a warning voice has been raised in support of self-control. Original sin may be an out-worn theory, but there are today in the occupied territory those who clearly see the evidences of what we know to be the consequences of original sin and of nothing else, and the need of something to counteract those consequences. Professor Irving Babbitt of Harvard is a veritable Isaias in this respect, and I commend to all his book "Democracy and Leadership." He does not, of course, recognize original sin, but he does recognize the fact that the world's troubles come from the failure of man to control his passions and that some motive of control must be found, if we are to escape total shipwreck. Traditional motives, that is religious motives, he assumes are no longer available, and he proposes a return to Socrates! Not his remedy, however, is the interesting point of his book, but his diagnosis. We can make that diagnosis absolutely our own. It is a fascinating book and it should be better known.

Gathering up now the threads of our argument, what conclusion can we draw but the conclusion that scholarship, real scholarship, science, real science, and straight thinking are upon our side of the line and that time works for us. A corollary of this conclusion obliges me to class the forces now opposing us as consisting mainly of the two things which are peculiarly reprobated in the current talk of the crowd—ignorance and superstition. If there be worse ignorance than that which does not know, does not know that it does not know, and knows a lot of things which are not so, I can not imagine it. Yet precisely that kind of ignorance is widely prevalent today, and is tending to spread. If I may use the word "superstition" to mean a strong

and blind faith in that which is not true, then surely "scientific" superstition is a distinguishing mark of our time. Imagine if you can, the hodge-podge of "facts," ideas, opinions, and beliefs likely to be generated in the mind of the average man who has been nourished on a steady diet of H. G. Wells, Arthur Brisbane, Frank Crane, Hendrik van Loon, and Conan Doyle, to mention only a few of the most popular teachers of the times, and to say nothing of the "Sunday science" in the yellow press! Glance over the newspaper reports of sermons delivered by popular "liberal" preachers and ask yourselves what kind of "scholarship," what kind of "science" and what kind of "thinking" begets those sermons. You remember, perhaps, the "modernist" explosion here of three years ago which threw so merciless a light upon the state of "liberal" Protestant thinking. What would a medieval Paris University student have thought of the logic of most of it, of the terminological chaos in which it was conducted and of the intellectual arrogance that marked it? Assuredly our position, like that of Marshal Foch, is much preferable to that of the enemy! It would be an impertinence upon my part to insist upon drawing a moral from this hurried survey applicable to members of our Association, for it must be clear to us all that the organization of the great counter-attack on the enemy is peculiarly the task of Catholic college men. Therefore, I merely place before you this map, sketched as it were, during a brief airplane flight over the lines. If it shall suggest anything useful to G. H. Q. then the observer will be happy. To me it seems that I discern a peculiarly appropriate meaning today in the words of the Psalmist—*Testimonia tua credibilia facta sunt nimis*—"Thy testimonies are become exceedingly credible."

The Human Intellect and Religion

REV. GEORGE O'NEILL, S.J.

Sermon delivered at St. Ignatius Church, Norwood, on the occasion of the Adelaide University Jubilee celebration, and reprinted with a few omissions from the "Southern Cross."

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IN the first place, it is the will of God that all men use their abilities with an intention that makes for His honor and glory. This is the sole rule of all right human action, and it is an indispensable rule. The one end of man's being and existence upon earth is to praise, reverence, and serve God, and by so doing to secure eternal happiness in God. If he does that he does well; if he fails to do that he does nought or does ill. True it is that God fulfils Himself in many ways, and this is seen in the vast varieties of human character no less than in the inexhaustible varieties of lower natures. With manifold and wondrous powers has He endowed man with thoughts that wander through eternity, with ambitions that scale the ramparts of heaven, with daring and skill that elicit the secrets of the stars and subjugate the forces of the elements. And in the vigorous and free use of these powers, and following of those impulses, is God glorified and God's will done, so long as God's will, directions, and prohibitions are duly regarded. He is no jealous tyrant, no narrow-minded task-master. No! He rejoices in the goodness and beauty of the myriad things He has made. He rejoices in their expansion, their joyous life—in the humming of the insects, in the flight of the birds, the labors of the bread winner, the toils of the ploughman and the shepherd, the sailor and the carpenter, in the investigations of the explorer, the subtle meditations of the philosopher, the efforts of the teacher, the realized dreams of the artist. Those who habitually and duly devote themselves to these human activities are working out God's designs, and may count upon His blessing and reward.

But who are they who rationally and duly labor? Let

us say at once, brethren, that for none is the fulfilment of this condition more difficult than for those whose inclination or duty leads them to the cultivation of the higher faculties of our nature—to the works of the intelligence and the imagination. Not so hard is it for those who labor at humble human tasks to understand, or at least to feel dimly, that they ought to submit themselves to the Almighty Creator. At least they feel that they have need of Him. Rising higher, they realize that their tasks require to be sanctified and glorified by something beyond themselves—in a word, by religion. But with the devotees of literature, science, and art it is different. Pride, the first sin, the worst sin, by which Angels fell, is their strong temptation. They are tempted to the folly of thinking and acting as if the poetical term "creative" sometimes applied to their works were to be taken in good earnest, and they were indeed the rivals of the Creator; as if their experiments and investigations could open up to them fields of knowledge without limit, and all-sufficient; as if God himself could somehow and some day come under their microscopes or their scalpels. They have been heard to claim that their pursuits need have no end or purpose beyond themselves. Science justifies itself; it need take no account of Divine Revelations. Art justifies itself; it is subject to no control from the moral law. Literature justifies itself; it may speak of all things and speak what it will, provided it speaks beautifully and charmingly.

Such are the vain and audacious pretensions that the human intellect has in all ages been prone to make for itself. And therefore, from the beginning, God-inspired men denounced such deplorable error and presumption. (Cf. Wisdom xiii, xiv.)

But, you will say, these old texts are out of place now, and irrelevant. Who nowadays in civilized lands worships gods of wood and stone, offers incense to heathen idols? My brethren, the fashion of idolatry changes, but its essence remains. There are today more subtle and dangerous rivals to the worship of the one true God than Moloch, or Mars, or blocks of stone. Men make to themselves false gods of the works of their hands, the desires of their hearts, the inventions of their brains. Even while, perhaps, they pity the superstitions

of the heathen, or accuse of superstition the honors rightly paid to sacred emblems by the Catholic Church, they are themselves the idolaters of a theory or a system—they glorify some knowledge or art as a good final in itself; they set on a pedestal for worship their own works without any acknowledgment of God's share in them.

The first condition, then, of a right use of our mental gifts is to be humbly submissive in that use to the Giver, not depriving Him of the glory which is rightly His, acknowledging that without Him there can be no gifts and no use. And the more generously the creature thus renders to the Creator the homage due, the more surely will those gifts and their use be raised to their highest power of dignity and usefulness. Whereas the more they are turned away from their true co-natural end—God's glory, and consequently the benefit of man—the more do they condemn themselves to nullity or harmfulness. The truth of this has been recognized by many thinkers naturally wise, though perhaps poorly gifted with supernatural lights. Hear, for example, Lord Bacon on the true ends of the studies in which he delighted so much:

But the greatest error of all [fallen into by students and philosophers] is the mistaking of the last and furthest end of knowledge. For men have entered into a desire of learning and knowledge sometimes upon a natural curiosity and inquisitive appetite; sometimes to entertain their minds with variety and delight; sometimes for ornament and reputation; and sometimes to enable them to victory of wit and contradiction; and most time for lucre and profession, and seldom sincerely to give a true account of their gift of reason to the benefit and use of men; as if there were sought in knowledge a couch whereupon to rest a searching and restless spirit; or a terrace for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect; or a tower of state for a proud mind to raise itself upon; or a fort or commanding ground for strife and contention; or a shop for profit or sale; and not a rich storehouse for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate.

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That end and consummation of our life and our work brings with it inevitably another condition of the right use of our abilities and powers, that they be exercised in subordination to God, to the lights He sends, to the

will He reveals. Whether He speaks by the Natural Law in our hearts or by positive Revelation by the voice of His representatives on earth, or by the private voice of conscience, to Him the human mind must bow. Faith, the acceptance of His Word because it is His, is a light that transcends that of reason. Reason (mere natural reason) has its own sphere, within which it can enlighten us concerning purely natural truths. Furthermore, it ascends with us: it is not left behind in highest flights of the soul. But the wider the explorations of reason, the higher it wings its flight, the more necessary becomes for it the aid of Divine Revelation. The ambition of universal knowledge (it was Bacon's dream) is a dangerous chimera. The quest of it by purely natural lights is inevitable disaster. Reason is indeed a spark from God's own infinite life and knowledge. Rightly used, it is a glory of our humanity, a torch, a beacon, that goes with us even into the regions of Revelation, and is not left behind in the highest ventures of Faith. But against its usurpations and presumption Faith has emphatically warned us. "I give Thee thanks, O Father," said our Divine Redeemer, "for that Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to the little ones." And what were those things thus hidden and thus revealed? The things of supreme moment, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, the secrets of a wise life and of a blessed eternity. And St. Paul, the most intellectually gifted and enlightened of Apostles, how emphatically he warns us (in the first and second chapters of the First Epistle to the Corinthians) against the intellectualist heresy, the notion that the supreme truths and the supreme arts, those that concern the eternal well-being of the soul, are to be grasped by superiorly cultivated human reason, are peculiarly accessible to the highly gifted and the well educated.

And thus the more men, confiding in their own lights, reject the Divine guidance, the more do they condemn their works to nullity or harmfulness. How sad to trace out, through the history of the world, so many brilliant intellects who might have served as torches to men along the dark ways of earth, and after having led other wanderers towards wisdom and happiness,

have "shone as stars throughout never-ending eternity," but who have become false guides, seducers, leading others after themselves into error and misery—"wandering lights," denounced by the Apostle St. Jude, "to whom the storm of darkness is reserved forever."

Such is the result of overweening confidence in natural powers, natural means, of measuring God's ways by our own infinitely trivial capacities. Let us rather acknowledge that outside our little conquests there are endless worlds to conquer. Let invention enlarge the range of merely human knowledge as it will, let discovery peer and speculate throughout ever new worlds and new wonders, there will ever remain an infinite beyond, untravelled realms of space and of time, realms unimagined that lie out of space and out of time. Faculty, instrument, conjecture, imagination, sink helpless before them. We await a new faculty—it is faith; a new instrument—it is Divine Revelation.

And let us remember that those worlds that lie beyond the range of the telescope, "beyond the shining of the farthest star," are not the regions of things that do not concern us. They are the world of our daily duties, daily hopes, daily moral struggles towards righteousness and happiness. Religion, faith, hope, and charity—these things are all beyond science, literature, and art; and yet they are as close to us as the bread we eat or the clothes we wear. Nay, they come closer! Science, literature, and art cannot bring God into our souls. Yet on this indwelling power within us our life depends, natural and supernatural. His affective, vitalizing power in our souls does not depend on knowledge or intellectual power. The poorest peasant and simplest child can possess God intimately when the self-pleased philosopher or poet has wholly missed him.

But this is the fate of wisdom that rebels. Thus is rejected the learning, art, and science that have fallen by pride. Only to those does He refuse to impart His grace. But when they know their own places they are dear to Him and cherished by Him, and it is His will that we should cultivate and develop them to the best of our power. Long ago, Solomon pleased God by preferring wisdom before wealth and crowns and thrones; so pleasing to God was his choice that in addition to

wisdom the fulness of earthly prosperity was also granted to him. And since that day, since Divine Wisdom itself appeared and conversed with men, it has found its elect vessels, the broadcasters of its voice, in men of splendid natural gifts, and not acquired learning. The Augustines, the Jeromes, the Gregories, Alcuin and Bernard, the founders of the great Irish schools, Thomas Aquinas and the scholastic theologians, Copernicus and Clavius and Leonardo, Francis de Sales and Pascal, Peter Canisius and Bellarmine, Bossuet and Alphonsus Liguori, Lacordaire and Newman, Mendel, Secchi, and Ampère, and Pasteur: such are a few of the names among myriads deserving of recall that easily rise to one's memory in traversing the ages that have passed since the Church first entered on her mission of civilization and enlightenment, the continuation of the career of Him who was the light of the world. From before the face of her apostles fled away the darkness of barbarism, as well as the darkness of sin.

Silent men [says Cardinal Newman] who observed about the country or discovered in the forest digging, clearing and building, and other silent men, not seen, were sitting in the cold cloister tiring their eyes and keeping their attention on the stretch while they painfully deciphered and copied and re-copied the manuscripts that they had saved. By degrees the woody swamp became a hermitage, a religious house, a farm, an abbey, a village, a seminary, a school of learning and a city. Roads and bridges connected it with other abbeys and cities, which had similarly grown up, and what the haughty Alaric and fierce Attila had broken to pieces these patient meditative men had brought together and made to live again.

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And how devoted to their work, patient and persevering they were!

When they had in the course of many years gained their peaceful victories, perhaps some new invader came, and with fire and sword undid their slow and persevering toil in an hour. The Hun succeeded to the Goth, the Lombard to the Hun, the Tartar to the Lombard; the Saxon was reclaimed only that the Dane might take his place. Down in the dust lay the labor and civilization of centuries—churches, colleges, cloisters, libraries—and nothing was left but to begin all over again.

And may we not, alas, too easily continue the story far beyond the point at which it is here left by Cardinal

Newman, and recall how often the work of Catholic religious orders has been destroyed, or, at least, interrupted by men who are called civilized, but who have perpetuated the spirit of the Goth, the Hun, the heathen Saxon or Dane? The story of pillage and waste has gone on all through the centuries. Russia and Mexico, Portugal and France are some of the latest lands that can tell such tales. But still has remained true what Newman tells; the children of the Church begin their tasks all over again,

so promptly, cheerfully and tranquilly, as if it were by some law of nature that the restoration came, and they were like the flower and shrubs and fruit trees which they reared, and which when ill-treated do not take vengeance or remember evil, but give forth branches, leaves or blossoms, perhaps in greater profusion and with richer quality for the very reason that the old were rudely broken off.

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But if humble religious men and women have been the best teachers and civilizers of the world, those in the high places of the Church have won some of their best glories by fostering and promoting that work. Kings inspired by Christian principles, like Charlemagne, Alfred and St. Louis, and Popes innumerable have been the founders of universities and colleges, the promoters of learning, art and science. Up to the year 1500 some 80 universities had been founded in Europe by papal (or in a few instances, royal) charter, 80 universities in a Europe whose total civilized population would hardly equal that of France at the present day, 80 universities for a population not six times that of Australia. Were Australia now as liberally provided as was medieval Europe, with institutes of learning of the highest range of scope her provision would be incomparably richer than it is. In America the Catholic Spaniards were but a very short time in possession when they established schools and then universities. By the year 1623 Spanish America could boast of eight or nine universities. In that year (1623) was founded Harvard, the first university established in America by English Protestantism; and not till 70 years later came the second, Yale. In Europe, too often as we have said, the riches accumulated from the past have often been ruthlessly destroyed. Colleges have been turned into barracks, churches into cinema

theatres, and the expulsion of religious men and women has helped the growth of the Bolsheviks. A false liberalism and an exaggerated nationalism have vainly striven to improve education in all its stages by moving farther and farther away from the ideals and methods of the Catholic Church. Not even from witnesses outside her fold from observers and thinkers who have little sympathy with her spiritual claims, the cry has come that revolt has gone too far, that revolt has been in the main fruitless or mischievous, that we must ask light in educational matter from the Church of all the ages.

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To return, therefore, to Christ is the remedy for which the evils of our world cry out. To Christ—not by particular ways and methods of any former age: for mere attempts to copy the first centuries or the thirteenth century, or any other particular century, with the peculiarities arising from its own needs and atmosphere, must always be mistakes and cannot lead our age aright. But as in all things we can and must learn much from the past, so very especially can we effect a return to Christ only if we take note of all that His teaching and His spirit have inspired in His Church since the day when leaving this earth He commissioned His Apostles to continue forever His work, promising His perpetual aid and saying to them:—"He that hears you, hears Me, and he that despises you, despises Me." If the world is to be saved from continued descent into darkness and destruction it must return to Christ as its King, and its Teacher; those who sit in its high places, whether of dominion or of intellect, must hearken to His voice and enter His fold. "I am the good shepherd." He still continues to tell them "there are sheep that are, and sheep that are not of My fold: these latter also I must bring and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."